

Alumni Address Racism

Ed. note: Three alumni share their experiences of working to dismantle racism. The alumni experience below is written by Rachel Koontz ('98).

When I first appeared at Spelman College, a blue-eyed blonde “ethnic” Mennonite swimming in a sea of darker hued faces, I wondered if I would find friends here, if I would find a home. Now, half a year later, I continue to struggle to understand issues of race and racism, but in a familiar setting with friendly faces.

Spelman College is an historically black women’s college located near the center of Atlanta, Georgia. Besides having a sound academic program and ample opportunity to work in the inner city, Spelman is a place where I can

See **Koontz** on page 7

Bethany parent Gretchen Weaver (Yellow Creek Mennonite) instructs student Jenna Liechty (Eighth Street Mennonite) how to quilt. Over 40 parents, grandparents, students, and community members representing 16 congregations from four states gathered twice a week at Bethany over a six-week period to help make this quilt for Bethany’s Spring Fun Fest quilt auction held March 24.



Boys Win Basketball Sectional... see page 3

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Bethany Surpasses State Testing Averages

For the third year since state-mandated ISTEP+ testing began in 1997, Bethany students have surpassed state testing averages by a wide margin (see chart on page 2 for scores).

In addition, retesting statistics show that Bethany’s remediation program for students needing to retake portions of the test has been highly successful.

Of the 57 seniors who initially took the test as sophomores at Bethany, 98% have passed both portions compared to only 83% statewide.

See **ISTEP+** on page 2

Special Services Expands Vision

While Bethany Christian Schools has a well-deserved reputation for attracting and graduating students with high academic abilities, Bethany is also increasingly attracting students who have experienced learning to be difficult.

In line with its mission of equipping all students to follow Christ, Bethany has focused greater effort and more resources on serving students with particular special education needs.

See **Special Services** on page 3

Board Vacancy Filled

Roger Miller joined the Bethany board in February, filling the vacancy created when J. Larry Neff, president of Goodwill Industries in South Bend, resigned last fall.

Roger is director of distribution at Banks Lumber and has been treasurer for 12 years at Walnut Hill Mennonite Church.

In addition to preparing students for life in the present world, Roger desires that students have "opportunity to study in an environment that challenges them in their Christian lives."

Roger and his wife Dawn are the parents of two sons: Kevin P. ('93) and Jeffrey M. ('95).

ISTEP + (from page 1)

"This combination of statistics," says principal Allan Dueck, "demonstrates the value of education Bethany provides for students of varying ability."

Students across the state are tested during grades 3, 6, 8, and 10. Those who do not pass either the language arts or mathematics portion of the grade 10 test must take a remediation course and then retake and pass the test before receiving a high school diploma. ISTEP+ graduation requirements take effect this spring with the class of 2000.

BCS Explores Ways to Increase Communication

The Feasibility Task Force, established by the Bethany board to implement recommendations of the feasibility study, is discussing ways Bethany can increase communication with its community and constituents.

To achieve this, the task force is proposing to establish an advisory council to assist the board in carrying out its mission. This advisory council would include people who represent local constituencies not represented, or underrepresented, on the board.

Sherm Kauffman, a member of the task force, states that this advisory council would be an avenue for "creating an opportunity for meaningful conversation and interaction within both the Mennonite and the other-than-Mennonite community." Mennonite and other-than-Mennonite representation will be approximately proportional to representation of those groups in the student body.

In addition to increasing communication and providing advocacy, the advisory council would provide counsel to the board in areas such as academic and co-curricular programs, strategic planning, facilities, development and fundraising, and marketing.

The task force has submitted an advisory council proposal to the board for consideration at its March meeting.

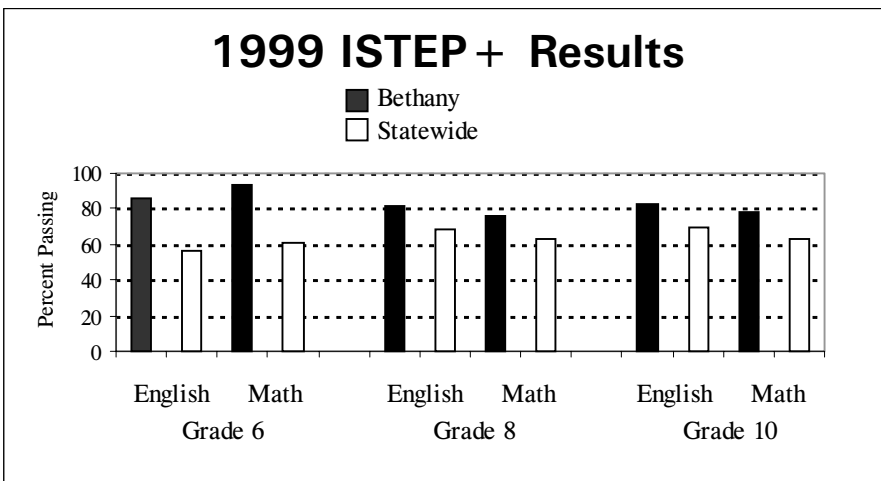
Strategic Planning Workshop

On January 22 Bethany's board of directors and administration participated in a strategic planning workshop with Rick Stiffney serving as facilitator. Together they evaluated board work during the past two years and reviewed master planning since 1995.

Stiffney outlined and the board evaluated its performance in five key areas of responsibility: 1) establish vision and direction, 2) adopt policy, 3) guide the organization, 4) select, guide, and support the administrator, and 5) continually improve board performance.

After Rick outlined steps in strategic planning, the group reflected and identified what is missing in the board's approach and discussed follow-up action—specifically, clarifying how the board intends to achieve vision during the next three to five years.

Avenues essential for implementing the school's vision include leadership, faculty and staff development, program, financial resources, facilities, marketing and sales, and constituent marketing relationships. A follow-up workshop will be held on June 8 to develop a unified strategic plan.



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Editor: J. Kevin Miller
 Consulting Editors: Allan Dueck, Margaret Fisher, Susan Gingerich, Cynthia Good Kauffman
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 Goshen, IN 46526-5499
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History Project

In preparation for Bethany's 50th anniversary in 2003-04, the board has appointed a committee to oversee the preparation of a book on Bethany's history.

Committee members include chair Roy Hartzler (F'76-'97), Sylvia Steiner Miller ('56), Wilmer Hollinger (F'65-86, 90-91), Rachel Lapp ('91), and principal Allan Dueck.

Special Services (from page 1)

Changes in state educational requirements and in student needs also have given impetus for Bethany to expand its Special Services program.

In 1997-98 the State of Indiana began requiring students to pass ISTEP+ tests at the sophomore level in math and English in order to qualify for a high school diploma. While Bethany students score well above the state average, not all pass.

For those who don't pass, Bethany offers remediation in both English and math. Initial statistics show remediation at Bethany to be highly successful as only one student from the 1997 testing still needs to pass one test—a 98% pass rate. However, the wide range in students' abilities—some may lack the ability to pass at the state-mandated levels—may cause statistics to vary from year to year.

The requirement of ISTEP+ testing also underlined the necessity of maintaining formal special education support. For example, ISTEP+ allows for certain testing modifications based on students' assessed needs as stated in their individual education plan (IEP). During fall 1998 ISTEP+ testing, eight students tested with adaptations and five of them passed.

Another important, but less obvious, reason for providing formal special education support is the specialized services students may be eligible to receive beyond high school. For example, Bethany helped one recent

The boys basketball team won sectionals for the second time in three years since class basketball began in 1998. In regionals Bethany lost 38-37 to Southern Wells as a last-second shot missed. During the regular season the team won three games on last second shots and finished with a 13-10 record. Team members include (l to r): (front) Mike Nachtigall, Andrew Kauffman, Jordan Buller, Jose Ortiz, Jeremy Leinbach, manager Anthony Slabaugh; (back) assistant coach Mike Goertzen, Andrew Lanctot, Aaron Lehman, Chris Westerbeek, David Martin, Lane Kaufmann, Tom Stahly, Jordan Cross, coach Jim Buller, and assistant coach Barry Johnson.

graduate obtain the use of an electric wheelchair during college.

The most-used aspect of Special Services is Structured Study Time (SST). Implemented approximately 15 years ago, SST is a program where the special education teacher works intensively with students experiencing academic difficulties—teaching them study skills and guiding them in their assigned work and test preparation.

Currently SST helps more than 30 students each semester with organization, focus, and study assistance. In the SST resource room, the Special Services teacher provides practical day-to-day supervision and encouragement for students easily distracted, overwhelmed, or confused by their learning tasks. In addition, students not on the SST roster but struggling with learning can seek assistance for a specified period of time—a unit, a project, or a month.

Another exciting new dimension of Special Services has been the addition of five computers and remedial software for student use. An audio word processing program and modified keyboarding software are examples of

specialized technology available to assist students with specific needs.

Bethany also relies on other institutions for some services. Locally, Elkhart County Special Education Cooperative (ECSEC) is responsible for testing, maintaining, and monitoring IEP's for 15 Bethany students.

In addition four students receive formal support through a federal section 504 placement that allows for extra educational support for those who have a diagnosed disability but do not qualify for special education services.

Financial resources is another limiting factor. Whereas, public school programs receive significant financial support from the government for remedial programs including ISTEP+, special education, and section 504, Bethany does not receive such funding. Providing students with more individualized assistance is labor intensive and expensive. Therefore, Special Services has needed to rely on designated gifts to cover some of the additional costs.

Within the limits of available financial and personnel resources, Bethany remains committed to providing a quality Christian education to all students.

Winter Athletic Awards

Boys Basketball

MVP: Jordan Cross

Team Player: Chris Westerbeek

Most Improved: Andrew Lanctot

Mental Attitude: David Martin, son of Harriet (Schrock, '69) and Dennis

Girls Basketball

MVP: Rachel Weaver, daughter of Dennis ('70) and Pat (Troyer, '71)

Mental Attitude: Melanie Hestand

Defense: Sonia Oswald, daughter of Myra (Nafziger, '66) and Dan

Most Improved: Sarah Thompson, daughter of Karen (Diener, '65) and George

Cheerleading

MVP: Brandi Schroeder, daughter of Debra (Hochstetler, '77) and Dale Hershberger

Joyce Rose, from WNDU-TV's Cooking Together program, teaches Jordan Buller ('02), son of Jim ('71) and Jane (Stoltzfus, '71), how to cook a healthy stir fry dish in Nutrition class.

Chess Club Highlights

At the January individual state finals, junior Jeff Claassen placed fifth, losing only to the eventual state champion. In the grade 9 and under division, Michael Honderich ('04), son of Martin ('68) and Carol (Helmuth, '68), finished second.

Grade 6 Musical: *God Is*

This spring grade 6 students will present *God Is*, a new musical written by teacher Eliza Stoltzfus. The musical uses dance to symbolize our relationship to God: we may be out of step or don't want to dance, but the dance continues.

Parent Scott Anderson blocks the shot of Jill Graber ('00), daughter of Cathy (Miller, '77) and Stan, during the annual donkeyball fundraiser. Teams of parents, students, teachers, and pastors competed in the event, which raised \$2,750 for middle school co-curricular activities.

Drama/Display on Criminal Justice

This year's drama, *Twelve Angry Men*, explored criminal justice issues. In conjunction with the drama, a Mennonite Central Committee collection of photos and interviews with men and women serving life sentences in Pennsylvania prisons was displayed during the preceding weeks.

"This drama has made me take more seriously standing up for what I believe." —Ben Friesen

The display, based on the book *Doing Life: Reflections of Men and Women Serving Life Sentences* by Howard Zehr ('62), helped the drama humanize the justice system by putting faces and stories to the victims, offenders, and those involved in deciding guilt or innocence.

Set in the jury room immediately following a murder trial, the drama develops around twelve jurors sifting through the evidence of what initially seems to be an "open and shut" case. However, as the jurors discuss the evidence and the life of the young man charged with the crime, it becomes clear that their own stories and biases influence how they approach the case.

Ben Friesen ('01), son of Howard ('72) and Maribeth (Diener, '72), discusses evidence with Derek Bontreger ('00), son of Charles ('68) and Jeanette, in Twelve Angry Men. Ben portrays a juror who initially stands alone by refusing to rush to a quick judgment of guilty. Ben says, "This drama has made me take more seriously standing up for what I believe."

Bethany Christian Middle School

presents

Alice in Wonderland

Friday, May 5 at 7 p.m.
Sunday, May 7, at 3 p.m.

Ticket Prices:

Adults: \$3 • Students: \$1



Calendar of Events

- Apr. 14 Fish Fry, 4:30-8:00 p.m.
Apr. 28 Junior-Senior Banquet
Apr. 30 *Jubilate Singers* at North Main Street,
9:30 a.m. and Holdeman, 6:30 p.m.
May 3-7 Senior Class Trip to Toronto
May 5, 7 *Alice in Wonderland* (see box at left)
May 9 Athletic Physicals, 6:30 p.m.
May 12,13 Spring Concerts (HS), 7:30 p.m.
May 16 Spring Concert (MS), 7 p.m.
May 23 Middle School New Student Night, 6 p.m.
May 26 Academic Awards Day
June 4 Commencement, 3 p.m.

C h a p e l G l i m p s e s

Journey to Peace

Growing up in an unchurched family with a military background, Bethany middle school teacher Ron Kolb-Wyckoff never thought of not joining the military.

Only after becoming a Christian and then reading the Sermon on the Mount did he begin to question whether or not he could kill. "It was not a question of whether I could handle the rigors of military life," said Ron, who graduated at the top of his 173-member basic training unit, "but a question of conscience."

After several years of soul searching, Bible study, and discussions with other Christians—both inside and outside the military—Ron left the military as a conscientious objector and affiliated with the Mennonite church.

His decisions to follow Christ and to leave the army initially caused much emotional pain and tension within his family. However, in time God brought healing

"God's grace and timing are impeccable—look for God, even when times are difficult, painful, and not very clear," Ron concluded.

CPT Assists Lakotas

Barry Cardinal shared how the presence of Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) alongside a nonviolent Lakota land occupation demonstration in South Dakota helps reduce harassment from local law enforcement officials and sends a clear message that the world is watching.

The Lakotas are protesting a federal government plan to transfer 92,000 acres to the state rather than return it to the Great Sioux Nation as stipulated in the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty.

Spiritual Life Week: The Holy Spirit

"I entered Spiritual Life Week determined not to get anything out of the chapel series" said one student, "but by the end of the week I opened myself up to the presence of the Holy Spirit."

Teachers and outside speakers shared different experiences and perspectives on the Holy Spirit. One spoke of speaking in tongues while another shared of being filled with love and life-giving energy.

Others shared how the Holy Spirit can help us value ourselves as God's children, provide insights in decisionmaking, and fellowship with our creator. The Holy Spirit was also described as a reformer, shaper, friend, guide, comforter, and healer.

Near the end of the week, many students experiencing emotional or physical pain responded to a prayer for healing. Some came forward to share their pain; others came to listen and pray with those experiencing pain.

Opposing Racism

"Despite many changes in civil rights in the last few decades, the legacy of white power and privilege this country was built on remains," said Karl Shelly, pastor at Assembly Mennonite Church. "Privilege," he continued, "is often least apparent to those who have it."

Karl read Mark 4:35-41 and 6:45-52 and likened our situation today with that of the disciples (Jews), who, frightened and discouraged by storms, were ready to discontinue their journey to the Gentiles until Jesus intervened.

Ida Martin ('65), a missionary in the Red Lake, Ontario, area for 23 years, serves with Impact North Ministries.

Sam Burkholder ('76) is a patent attorney in Washington, D.C. He, wife Christine, and son Lucas (2) live in nearby Alexandria, Va.

Jonathan Eash ('80), wife Marla, and sons Colin and Harrison began a stone cutting shop three years ago.

Linda Eckert ('81) married Travis Casper, San Jose, Calif., on Oct. 21.

Linda Dintaman Martin ('82) researches inflammatory airway diseases at North Carolina State University. She and husband James reside in Raleigh along with their two children Erika (5) and Joshua (2).

Lisa Roth Walter ('82) and husband Steve, Lancaster, Pa., gave birth to daughter Savannah Grace on Oct. 15.

Paul Mark ('83) and wife Kimberley, Granger, Ind., gave birth to son Jacob Paul on Aug. 20.

Durrell Ramer ('83) and wife Stephanie, Madison, Wis., gave birth to son Samuel Brenneman on Feb. 14.

Karen McElmurry ('84) married Lee Pfahler on Dec. 18 in Goshen.

Lisa (Brandeberry) Avedician ('85) and husband Rolland, Goshen, gave birth to Ian Micah on Jan. 10.

Anita (Miller) Yoder ('85) and husband Randi, Middlebury, Ind., gave birth to son Conrad Warren on Dec. 20.

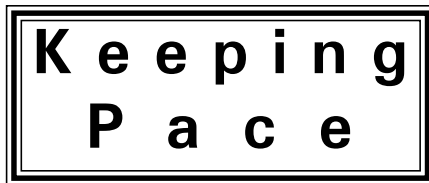
Judy Clemens Smucker ('87) and husband Steve, Telford, Pa., gave birth to Tristan Paul on Oct. 2.

Deanna Risser ('89) works as an administrative assistant in Finance and Human Resources at Goshen College.

Ryan Schrag ('90) and wife Kim, Sarasota, Fla, gave birth to daughter Alyssa Nicole on Dec. 1. Ryan owns Schrag Lawn Care.

Dan Thut ('90) married Karla Hernandez on Dec. 18 in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

Tiffany (Slabaugh, '92) and Jason ('89) Swihart, Nappanee, Ind., gave birth to Skyler Cheyenne on March 1, 1999.



Jennifer (Hostetler) Chizum ('94) and husband Gary, Middlebury, Ind., gave birth to daughter Kelsey Ann on Dec. 8.

Jonathan Stoll ('96) married Takesha Walker on Dec. 18 in Bristol, Ind.

Rachel Wenger-Keller ('98) will graduate in May from Pennsylvania School of Muscle Therapy.

Email Groups for Alumni

An email discussion list—internet access not required—for the class of '73 is now available. To join contact Tim Baker at tbaker@vztlaw.com.

Alumni from other classes interested in starting their own list can also contact Tim to learn what is involved.

Future Class Reunions

Class of '55: June 2-3 at Camp Mack, Milford. Contact Marietta Hochstetler Slabach at 219 773-3397.

Class of '60: July 1 at Bread & Chocolate, Goshen. Contact Dorcas Miller Steider at 219 534-6276 (dorcas@mbm.org) or Shirley Miller Miller at 219 831-5940 (mksem@npcc.net).

Class of '70: August 19, 6 p.m. at Bread and Chocolate. Contact John King at 219 533-2818 (johnrk@mma-online.org).

Class of '80: July 29, 5:30 p.m. at Greencroft Center in Goshen. Contact Marla Grabill Brenneman at 219 534-3816 (marla@cyberlink.com).

Class of '85: Date to be announced. Contact Ric Troyer at 206 706-0529 (troyer@write.me.com).

Class of '90: Date to be announced. Contact Tonya Kauffman Miller at 317 290-9916 (tkmiller@iupui.edu).

Class of '95: Date to be announced. Contact Kristen Stiffney Grantham at 219 206-8142.

Weavers in the News

A four-year-old Guernsey (cow) owned by Verl ('71) and Gretchen (Garber, '73) Weaver has set national and state records for producing 36,603 pounds of milk, 1915 pounds of butterfat, and 1,307 pounds of protein in one year. The state average is 14,175 for milk, 618 for fat, and 508 for protein.

The Weavers have distinguished themselves with many other dairy awards including champion Guernseys at the Indiana State Fair four of the last five years. In addition, numerous awards have been won at the Elkhart County Fair by their children: Chris ('97), Jeff ('99), and Marlys ('06).

Owen Weaver ('68)

Owen is co-owner of a new year-round farmer's market in Goshen scheduled to open in April. In addition to local and organic foods, the market will sell baked goods and items produced by local artists and artisans.

Carl Weaver ('62)

A biology teacher at Goshen High School, Carl was recognized for his creative teaching by the Indiana Association of Biology Teachers.

In addition to writing the curriculum for some courses he teaches, in the late 1980s Carl started a bioethics class that integrates science with sociology and philosophy. Carl also leads a spring marine biology class to Florida.

Chris Weaver ('97)

Chris served six months with WeCare Prison Ministry in Alabama. An inmate wrote to Chris's pastor:

"I am thankful for the raising that Chris had at home, for his parents, grandparents, and the body of Christ there—all this had an effect on his life and it shows.

"The prison systems need many young men like Chris to come [and witness Christ]. In prison you find the opposite to Chris, men who did not have a Godly raising. When they meet Chris they see he is for real and this leads many to Christ."

Rachel Koontz ('98)

continue to deepen and broaden my understanding of race, and its intersections with gender and class.

For a long time I've felt a call as a Christian and as a white, middle-class, American female, to work with issues of racism. I don't know exactly how to do this. I'm told however that I can put myself in places where I'm in the minority and learn from others. I have sought to do that in many ways.

Last year I lived and worked in an intentional Christian community that served the homeless. The very raw racism I often observed on the streets, as well as casual conversations on race with many homeless men, were essential in forming my rudimentary understanding of race relations.

Now at Spelman College I am continuing that learning in a very different way, through classes (such as African Diaspora in the World), extracurricular activities (like Gospel Choir), and informal conversations with friends.

Malinda E. Berry ('92)

Sweet Honey in the Rock sings: "If you see me stumble, don't stand back and look on. Reach out now, baby, give your hands to the struggle."

Struggle has many forms and is felt by many people in many places. Righteous struggle—working for God's justice—often means working to change systems, striving to change the way we live our lives, and seeking clearer understandings about the purpose of this generous gift of life from God, our Creator.

As of this point in my life, I've carried banners of protest in front of the White House against racist U.S. foreign policy and banners of prayer through the city of Elkhart in the shadow of a racial hate crime.

I'm still learning to talk about race and racism at a more intimate and personal level, but my work with the AMBS Damascus Road Team and the personal relationships I've built there have been helping me do this.

It's not a priority for me to be color blind. That's like slapping a band-aid on a compound fracture. I want to see all the colors of God's good work and understand why we are so fragile. If I am serious about being a channel of God's healing and hope, I need to give my whole self to righteous struggle.

We must listen to the voices and see the faces of those who don't represent dominant culture, but rather who remind us that people suffer with broken spirits around us every day.

During February, I organized a Spike Lee film festival on behalf of the AMBS Damascus Road Team. Lee's films gave us a forum to talk about race, racism, God's good work, and mending the brokenhearted by committing ourselves to righteous struggle in whatever work we do.

Malinda is working toward an MA in Peace Studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

Alumni Dismantling Racism

Mark Chupp ('76)

Can enemies become friends? Maybe not always, but I have witnessed it many times.

After graduating from Goshen College, I worked with the Elkhart Victim Offender Reconciliation Program, which led to a personal mission to serve as a bridge between those in conflict.

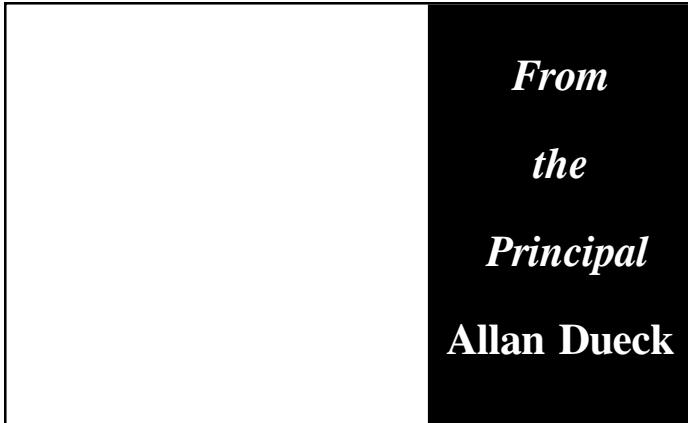
In 1988, my wife Sharon and I joined Mennonite Central Committee and moved to Costa Rica. I helped support local reconciliation commissions in Nicaragua. These lay Christian leaders saved many lives as they negotiated peace between Contra forces and the Nicaraguan government.

Yet some of the greatest challenges have come at home. In 1994 I assisted Goshen High School in addressing violence between a white supremacy gang and Hispanic gang. After a school assessment we held a day-long mediation between gang leaders. As a result, the gang leaders were reconciled, "threw down their colors," and the school made a series of changes to prevent racism from having a foothold in the school.

I have used this peacemaking process between white and black students, and in addressing a hateful act against gay and lesbian students at Goshen College. Each time I have seen people move from hatred to understanding and love as they entered into the safe space created by mediation. Hearing another's struggles and hurts melted away walls of prejudice.

Today I promote racial healing through Cleveland State University in one of the most segregated cities in the U.S. At Bethany I experienced diverse cultures and developed a commitment to God's way of peace. My work as a peacemaker has transformed my own life.

Mark is married to Sharon Shumaker ('75). They have two children: Loren (11) and Emily (8).



During my years in Mennonite schools, I've observed that church schooling impacts young people in part by giving them opportunity to adopt a world view different from society's prevailing materialistic world view.

For instance, chapel speakers share experiences and convictions that stretch students' views. Nathan Kingsley ('89) spoke of serving in Argentina and a retired pastor invited students to send books to Ugandan Christians. Later Amy Gopp shared about conflict resolution in Croatia and Bosnia, and Trish Yoder her calling to minister to female prison inmates.

Students, of course, learn much from faculty members. One teacher tells of her literacy work with inner city kids, another of experiences in Mennonite Central Committee service in Eastern Europe, and another of time as a missionary kid in Central America. As they mentor students, teachers share stories and convictions about their calling as Christians in a needy world—stories that nudge students towards a Christian world view.

Classroom and cocurricular activities help shape students' world view. For instance, English 11 students reading *Cry the Beloved Country* may

be moved to a new awareness of people's pain in a racially segregated society. Many who acted in or viewed the recent drama *Twelve Angry Men* were prompted to rethink their easy understanding of criminal justice.

Jesus in his inaugural address in the Nazareth Synagogue chose to quote Isaiah 61:1-2. Applying the prophet's words to himself, Jesus spoke of his calling "to bring good news to the poor," "to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind," and "to let the oppressed go free" [Luke 4:18-19].

If justice for captives and freedom for the oppressed were at the heart of Jesus' calling, then surely we as his followers should take note. This issue of the *Bulletin* illustrates ways in which Bethany students have been and are being challenged to develop a Christ-centered world view. Join me in praying that students will adopt a world view that—in the words of the school's mission statement—empowers them "to serve others, promote peace, and lead in the church and the world."

Bethany Christian Schools

2904 South Main Street
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